DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 351 CS 013 360

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TITLE Reading Poverty.
ISBN ISBN-0-325-00017-4
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 230p.
AVAILABLE FROM Heinemann, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-5007; Fax: 203-222-1502; Tel: 800-793-2152 (Toll Free); Web site: http://www.heinemann.com ($20).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Economically Disadvantaged; Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; National Standards; Politics of Education; *Poverty; *Reading; *Reading Instruction; School Business Relationship; *Social Environment; Socioeconomic Status

ABSTRACT

The central purpose of this book is to challenge current social constructions of poverty, reading education, and the putative relationship between the two. It explores how official and popular representations of poverty are bound to specific historical, social, and economic conditions of their own production. The book offers four stances of reading poverty: the first interrogates the official construction of poverty; the second explains how various representations of the causes of poverty demonstrate the ideological positions and political intentions of their proponents; the third reverses the connotation of the double-entendre of the book's title to explore the poverty of reading practices in American schools; and the fourth presents the need to retheorize poverty and school reading practices in the post-industrial democracy. After a preface and an introduction, chapters in the book are: (1) This Train Don't Carry No Shirkers...Reading Bill Clinton; (2) Them That's Not Shall Lose: Reading Official Poverty in America?; (3) If It Wasn't for Bad Luck: Reading the Causes of Poverty; (4) And There Ain't Nothin' You Can Do about It: Reading "The Bell Curve"; (5) Bad to the Bone: Reading Moral Literacy; (6) The World Is in an Uproar/The Danger Zone Is Everywhere: Reading the Reading Crisis; (7) Come on Up, I've Got a Lifeline: Reading Targeted Programs; (8) Everybody Look What's Goin' Down: Reading Educational Functionalism and Rereading Poverty in America; and (9) Listen Here People, Listen to Me, I Don't Wanna Be Mistreated by No Bourgeoisie: Reading the Road Ahead. (Contains approximately 325 references.) (RS)

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